

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 00504 131112Z

17

ACTION EA-09

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6048

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 0504

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, CU, JA

SUBJECT: JAPANESE-CUBAN ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY CONTINUES APACE

SUMMARY: A BLUE-RIBBON JAPANESE BUSINESS GROUP WILL VISIT CUBA ON A GOOD-WILL MISSION IN MID-FEBRUARY, AND CUBAN VICE PREMIER RODRIGUEZ WILL PAY AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO JAPAN SOMETIME THIS YEAR. END SUMMARY.

1. MOFA 1ST CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA DIVISION DIRECTOR HAYAKAWA BRIEFED EMBOFF ON IMPENDING EXCHANGE OF VISITS BETWEEN CUBA AND ITS NUMBER-TWO TRADING PARTNER, JAPAN, ON JANUARY 12. HAYAKAWA STRESSED THAT IN JAPANESE VIEW, VISITS ARE ECONOMICALLY, BUT NOT POLITICALLY, SIGNIFICANT. HE ASKED THAT INFORMATION BE CLOSELY HELD PENDING OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

2. YOSHIHIRO INAYAMA, CHAIRMAN OF NEW JAPAN STEEL CO. AND CONCURRENTLY CHAIRMAN OF JAPAN-CUBA ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (JCEC), WILL LEAD GOODWILL MISSION ON VISIT TO CUBA FEBRUARY 17-20. JCEC, WITH MEMBERSHIP OF SOME SEVENTY FIRMS, IS BACKED BY KEIDANREN; MOVING
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 00504 131112Z

FORCES IN ADDITION TO NEW JAPAN STEEL ARE KOMATSU

LTD. (CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT), HINO MOTORS LTD. (TRUCKS), AND SUGAR REFINERY INDUSTRY, LTD. JCEC WILL PROVIDE STAFF SUPPORT FOR MISSION. AFTER SOME DELIBERATION, SAYS HAYAKAWA, GOJ HAS DECIDED TO SEND HIM AND HIROO KINOSHITA, DIRECTOR OF MITI AMERICAS-OCEANIA DIVISION, ALONG AS OBSERVERS.

4. FURTHER, CUBAN VICE PREMIER FOR FOREIGN RELATIONS (AND CUBAN COMMUNIST PARTY EMINENCE) CARLOS RAFAWL RODRIGUEZ RODRIGUEZ HAS ACCEPTED INVITATION TO VISIT JAPAN AS STATE GUEST THIS YEAR. VISIT WAS PROPOSED BY INAYAMA THROUGH FORMER MITI PARLIAMENTARY VICE MINISTER TO FONMIN MIYAZAWA, WHO AFTER STUDY HAD FORMAL INVITATION RELAYED THROUGH JAPANESE AMBASSADOR IN HAVANA. RODRIGUEZ MAY COME AS EARLY AS THIS SPRING.

5. COMMENT: THESE VISITS, FOLLOWING ON SEVERAL IMPORTANT EXCHANGES LAST YEAR, SEEM INTENDED TO PUT BURGEONING JAPAN-CUBA ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP ON FIRM FOOTING. CUBA IN 1975 SUPPLIED ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF JAPANESE SUGAR CONSUMPTION, IN RETURN TOOK MAINLY INDUSTRIAL PLANTS, SHIPS AND HEAVY MACHINERY, FOR TWO-WAY TOTAL OF DOLS 690 MILLION IN FIRST 10 MONTHS OF 1975, UP FROM DOLS 290 MILLION IN 1973. HODGSON

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